**Educational Philosophy Statement**

When I think about whom I am I think about why I choose to make each of my decisions. I make decisions based on how they will affect me and those around me. I remember being told once that I should put myself first in order to be happy. What I discovered for me was that helping others made me happy. I think education is a wonderful field filled with so many opportunities to make a difference in someone’s life. Some students will spend more time with their teachers at school than with their parents or guardians at home. As a high school social studies teacher I hope to take advantage of every opportunity given to me to make a difference.

Philosophers that shape who I am as an educator include Confucius and Socrates. Confucius’s idea of setting up a universal ethical system where students can learn everything they need to know while developing their own moral views made a lot of sense to me. That is everything that I wanted in my classroom when I first wanted to be an educator. I think this creates strong educated people which in turn creates a strong and educated society. It also means that students are informed, involved, and ready for decision making. Socrates was similar in the way that students would become morally excellent. I want them developing their own moral thinking while I present them with cases and events. They would be able to question what we were doing and come up with their own ideas instead of being told how to think. Adding to that Mann’s philosophy added physical and artistic education which I believe are both important in opening up students’ interests.

One of the most important things to me is that the classroom climate is welcoming and safe for everyone. I think that is where the best learning and thinking occurs. I do not want students to be scared of asking questions, sharing, or working with new people. I would be really happy if the class created its own small family-like community. This would make it a class that they would be excited to get to. These relationships are important for more than just educational purposes. It would be ideal that the students also feel emotionally safe. I want to do everything I can for my students, and in order to do this we all need to get to know each other. We need to be able to read each other’s emotions and reactions to know if someone needs help even if they are not verbally asking for it.

My classroom will be very neat and organized. I would like to think that for this reason my class would also run very smoothly, but I also expect organized chaos. I hope that the organization along with the organized chaos will help learners who need focus as well as students who do not like to follow a set list of assignments. I plan to be prepared every day for things to change. Being prepared that way will ensure that the resources students need will almost always be readily available. In my classroom there will be constant assessments. I think this is important because I want to know immediately if a student does not understand something. Everything in the classroom is constantly being built from the last lesson and corresponding assignments. If a student gets stranded at one point and there is no intervention that is where they will probably stay and so constant assessment is critical. Assessment can have a negative connotation because it is often linked to two choices: success or failure. My formative assessments are not for failure, they are for seeking success. I see it more as the students and I knowing exactly where we all are. These assessments are not for students to be worrying about their grades. Instead it will be for staying on track and moving forward.